

Commerce Work Programs

July 2009

- Commerce recently implemented three additional supported work programs for WorkFirst parents.
- Over 6500 parents have been enrolled in the supported work programs to date.
- Community Service helps parents who are working less than full-time or in between WorkFirst activities.
- Community Works is designed to improve the employability of parents who need additional support and services.
- Community Work Experience provides unpaid, long-term work experience to WorkFirst parents.

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For more information about the WorkFirst program, visit
www.workfirst.wa.gov

In March 2007, the Department of Commerce (Commerce) implemented three additional supported work programs for WorkFirst parents:

Community Service, Community Works, and Community Work Experience. Commerce contracts with local community-based organizations to provide and manage these programs.

What is Community Service?

The Community Service (CS) program provides employment skills to WorkFirst parents in a setting that directly benefit the community; including fields such as health, social service, environmental protection, education, urban and rural development, welfare, recreation, public facilities, public safety, and child care.

CS is designed for WorkFirst parents who are:

- Employed less than 32 hours per week.
- Participating in other activities but need additional hours to meet WorkFirst participation requirements.
- Waiting for another activity to start or during breaks from other activities such as summer breaks for students in an education program.

What is Community Works?

The Community Works (CW) program is designed to improve the employability of parents who are able to participate in a work activity with the additional support of a case manager/social worker for continued extensive services. As with Community Service, parents engaged in Community Works perform work for the direct benefit of the community.

What is Community Work Experience?

Community Work Experience (CWEX) provides unpaid work experience opportunities for parents who are not otherwise able to obtain employment without experience, and who require minimal supervision on a worksite. The CWEX program establishes a worksite for a parent to build the specific skills, training, knowledge, and experience necessary to obtain employment in their chosen career field. Placement into the CWEX program takes into account the prior training, experience, and skills of a parent to determine an appropriate worksite.

CWEX is designed for WorkFirst parents who:

- Need to acquire job skills to be competitive in the labor market.
- Have previously participated in Job Search but were unable to obtain employment for lack of experience.
- Have training or previous experience in a specific field but need additional support to be competitive in the labor market.
- Require minimal case management to be successful on a worksite.